

Policy for the Provision of Special Diets and Communication of Allergens

Lancashire County Catering Service is committed to satisfying the needs of our customers and stakeholders and shall endeavour to meet their expectations.

In order to meet our commitments it is our policy to provide a school meal for all pupils, including those with medical diets.

With the introduction of Universal Infant Free School Meal in September 2014 and changes to the Food Information Regulations 2013 in December 2014, it is necessary to outline our procedures for handling the service of special diets and the communication of allergen information to our customers.

Allergens

Allergen information shall be available and easily accessible to customers, in accordance with the Food Information Regulations (FIR) 2013, for all foods, for the following list of allergens:

- Celery
- Cereals containing gluten
- Crustaceans
- Eggs
- Fish
- Lupin
- Milk
- Molluscs
- Mustard
- Nuts
- Peanuts
- Sesame seeds
- Soya
- Sulphur dioxide

Special Diets

Special diets are diets for pupils with a medically diagnosed requirement; not just a dislike of certain foods or food groups. It is our policy to provide a menu for those pupils with medically diagnosed food allergies, food intolerances or a medical condition which affects eating requirements. The Catering Service understands that some people have particular sensitivities to certain foods that non – sufferers would find harmless. When someone has a food allergy, their immune system reacts to a particular food or food groups.

We recognise that severe allergies can cause life threatening reactions and that food intolerances do not involve the immune system and are not generally life threatening, but can make the customer feel poorly.

It is our policy to safely provide special diets by operating a rigorous food safety management system as part of our central HACCP system, which identifies the appropriate controls and working instructions required for the provision of special diets.

The organisation will provide all necessary training and instruction to Catering management and frontline staff and monitor its effectiveness. The provision of special diets will be regularly audited and if applicable corrective measures put in place.

Roles & Responsibilities

Catering Service Management

- To provide planned menus for:
 - Gluten intolerance – a gluten free menu is available using specific gluten free products such as flour, pasta and bread mix.
 - Lactose intolerance – a lactose free menu is available and soya milk available to drink if applicable. **Vegetarian – Each day a vegetarian option will be made available as part of our standard menu.**
 - Vegetarian – Each day a vegetarian option will be made available as part of our standard menu.
 - Nut allergies – Standard school menus do not contain nuts as an ingredient in the recipe.
- To collate and provide allergen information relating to recipes and planned menus and communicate to catering staff and schools.
- To agree any product substitutions made to kitchens prior to delivery.
- To provide nutritional data if requested.
- To provide appropriate signage to advise customers on where to access allergen information.
- To ensure ingredient specifications for all products included in our menus are checked to ensure they meet the dietary requirements of our customers.
- To monitor the provision of special diets, communication of allergens and compliance with this policy.

Parent/Guardian

- To inform school of their child's allergy or intolerance and provide supporting medical evidence relating to their child's condition. This can be provided as a letter from their GP or a consultant paediatrician, together with any information received from their dietician.
- To seek medical or dietetic advice if they consider their child to have a medical condition that affects eating requirements.

- To provide as much information as possible to their child's school to assist in the provision of a suitable menu.
- To discuss the menu with their child and/or dietician to assist in making suitable choices.
- If necessary to meet with the school and catering supervisor to discuss the menu provision.

The School

- Make the catering staff at the production kitchen aware of pupils who require a special diet or who have an allergy.
- To ensure Catering staff (kitchen and if applicable, the dining centre) are made aware of any relevant information that will assist in the provision of a suitable menu.
- To facilitate a meeting with the parent/guardian, dietician and catering supervisor when this is necessary.
- Provide information, regarding the pupil's dietary needs, to any staff members who will be supporting the pupil.
- Provide a suitable level of supervision for pupils when lunches are selected and served so that the welfare of the pupil is safeguarded.
- To communicate seasonal menu changes to the parent/guardian when these are published by the catering service.
- Inform the catering supervisor of any changes to a pupil's dietary requirements.
- Inform the catering supervisor of any absences so a meal is not prepared when not required.
- In respect of gluten and lactose free menus; where more than one choice is available, ask the child to choose one dish only and inform the catering supervisor before 9:30am.

Catering Service Kitchen Staff

- When required, provide a suitable meal using the standard menu recipes, allergen table and special diet checklist provided.
- To advise customers of the allergen information as and when requested.
- To follow a specific set of working instructions which ensures the meal is prepared to minimise the risk of cross contamination.
- Check that the products delivered are the correct brands.
- Prior to a meal being produced for a customer with a special diet or allergy ensure that the labelling of the products being used is checked to determine that it does not contain the allergen relevant to that customer.
- Display the appropriate signage and advise customers of where to access allergen information.
- To record all special dietary requirements in section 9 of the kitchen management portfolio so that in the event of staff absence the relevant information is available for temporary staff.

- Communicate with and supervise catering assistants in the serving of special diets and meals to those pupils with allergies.
- When transporting to another school, ensure the name of the child and the items that contain the allergen are recorded on the delivery sheet. The supply kitchen must identify the meal that is suitable on the delivery sheet and in the packing.